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ABSTRACT

These guidelines for developing and maintaining a library in a resident nursing home, for use by either staff members or volunteers, recommend an individual survey of each resident as a way of determining reading preferences and deciding what materials should be ordered. Other areas examined are the location of the library, including space and furniture needs; acquisition of books, magazines, newspapers, audiovisual materials, and library supplies; organization of materials, including formats for book cards and pockets, and for shelf list, author, title, and subject catalog cards; circulation procedures; and publicity for library events. Pertinent information resources in the Central New York area are listed. (FM)

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ORGANIZING A NURSING HOME LIBRARY FOR RESIDENTS

A Do-It-Yourself Manual

by

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TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

A library in a resident nursing home is an exciting project! It can provide intellectual as well as social companionship to its users. It can provide an opportunity for our older citizens to maintain an involvement in the outside world. It can also meet their information needs.

The purpose of this handbook is to describe how to organize and maintain library materials and programs in a resident nursing home. It could be used by any staff member or volunteer who has the interest and the time to devote to it. It is necessary to conduct a preference survey to find out the specific needs, habits and tastes of the residents of your nursing home. The simplest method is to visit each person individually and ask them their reading preferences. Then you may begin ordering materials and planning programs. For example, if a large number of people like to read current events magazines or books, you might organize a current events discussion group that would meet in your library. Or, if many enjoy craft books,you might have a weekly craft exhibit or invite a guest to demonstrate a specific craft. The possibilities are endless!

Now it is time to incorporate all of your ideas and information for establishing a library. Good luck!

LOCATION

A resident library should be located convenient to resident activity so as to be of the greatest availability to the most number of people. A separate room is ideal. However, if a separate room is unavailable, a portion of an existing center, such as an activities room, could be used. In that case an area can be partitioned off either with portable partitions or with furniture placement. The area should be cheerful, well-lit, comfortable and inviting.

L O C A T I O N

SPACE

The space should be large enough to accommodate all the materials, shelving and other furniture to be used as well as room for expansion. Space should also be allowed for passage of residents using walkers or wheelchairs.

FURNITURE

The basic furniture needs would include:

- tables(preferably round) and chairs
- cabinets for storage of non-book materials
- bookshelves
- card catalog
- comfortable easy chairs(or rockers)
- small desk where books may be charged out
- typewriter

(Amounts of furniture depend on population of nursing home)

A portable book-cart is desirable for reaching non-ambulatory residents.

ACQUISITION

MATERIALS

The basic library collection for a nursing home should contain the following types of materials:

Books

There should be a selection of books in the categories of romance, mystery, western, biography, history, travel and religion, as well as those of special interest to the residents of your institution, as determined by your preference survey. A good selection of large-print books should be included as well as regular print and paperbacks. You should also have a dictionary and atlas. Both are available in large-print.

The most desirable method of acquiring books is, of course, through your own purchasing. However, if your funds are small, as most are, you may arrange to have a revolving collection through the courtesy of the Onondaga Public Library System, including regular books, large-print materials, talking books and machines and materials in braille.

Magazines

Subscriptions to the following types of magazines are desirable --- news, travel, women's, information and craft. Two magazines that are highly recommended are National Geographic and Reader's Digest. Reader's Digest may be purchased in large-print format.

Newspapers

Your local daily newspaper should be available. At least one national newspaper should also be ordered. The New York Times and The Wall Street Journal are both available in large-print format.

Audio-Visual Materials

Records and tapes are usually well-liked and,in most cases, affordable. Record players and cassette tape recorders should be readily available.

I also recommend a bulletin board or easel to post pamphlets, announcements or other information of interest to the elderly. Pictures, prints, plants, aquariums, terrariums and globe add points of interest and warmth to your library.

Materials such as filmstrips and films are expensive to own but may be borrowed through the Onondaga Public Library.

Library Supplies

You will need the following basic items:

catalog cards
book pockets
date due slips
glue
book cards
rubber stamp with name and address of institution
Dewey Decimal System of Classification
Sear's List of Subject Headings
date due stamp
stamp pad

Materials

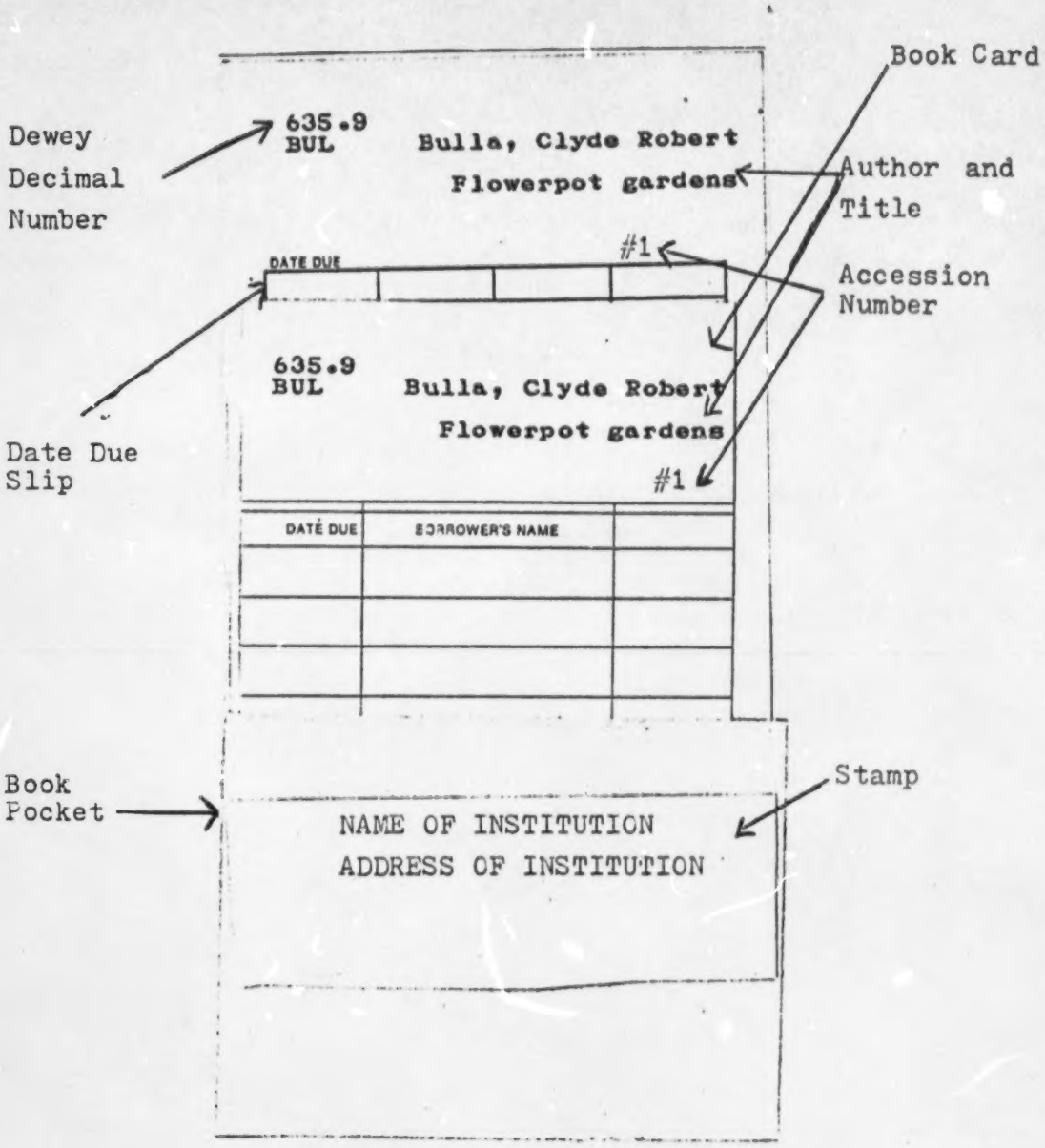
You have now acquired your collection of book and non-book materials and your next task is to prepare them for circulation.

1. Stamp the inside front and back covers with the name and address of your institution. Also stamp the top of the book if possible.

2. Paste a book pocket and date due slip onto the inside back cover of the book.

3. Prepare a book card for the book by writing its author and title on the appropriate lines. In the upper left-hand corner of the card should appear the designation for that book of FIC for fiction or the Dewey number for non-fiction. Assign the book an accession number, starting your collection with #1. Put the accession number on the book card, pocket and inside book cover.

EXAMPLE OF BOOK POCKET AND BOOK CARD



Catalog Cards

Generally each book or other item should have three cards--- a shelf list card, an author card and a title card. For non-fiction materials you may wish to also have at least one subject card.

Below is an example of a shelf list card. These cards are kept in a separate place for purposes of inventory. A shelf list card should include the call number, author and title, and publisher and year of publication. Other information such as number of pages, illustrations and size of book are optional. The accession number of the book should also appear on the shelf list card.

SHELF LIST CARD

#1

635.9
BUL

Bulla, Clyde Robert.
Flowerpot gardens. Pictures by Henry Evans. New York, T. Y. Crowell [1967]
48 p. illus. 21 cm.

Because it is likely that your collection will be small, most people will look for a particular book by scanning the shelves. However, as your collection grows, a card catalog becomes increasingly important. The card catalog should be kept simple and easy to use.

The only differences between the shelf list card and all the other cards are that the accession number need not appear on the other cards and the other cards include a brief description of the book. The title card has the title on the top of the card; the subject card likewise has the subject of the book in capital letters at the top of the card.

These cards are filed in alphabetical order in your card catalog.

AUTHOR CARD

635.9
BUL

Bulla, Clyde Robert.
Flowerpot gardens. Pictures by Henry Evans. New York, T. Y. Crowell [1967]
48 p. illus. 21 cm.

Descriptions of twenty plants that are suitable for an indoor garden along with clear and simple instructions for growing each of them.

TITLE CARD

Flowerpot gardens.

635.9 BUL
Bulla, Clyde Robert.
Flowerpot gardens. Pictures by Henry Evans. New York, T. Y. Crowell [1967]
48 p. illus. 21 cm.

Descriptions of twenty plants that are suitable for an indoor garden along with clear and simple instructions for growing each of them.

SUBJECT CARD

HOUSE PLANTS

635.9 BUL
Bulla, Clyde Robert.
Flowerpot gardens. Pictures by Henry Evans. New York, T. Y. Crowell [1967]
48 p. illus. 21 cm.

Descriptions of twenty plants that are suitable for an indoor garden along with clear and simple instructions for growing each of them.

CIRCULATION

Now that you have organized your collection, it is time to start circulating them. It will be necessary for someone to use a portable cart to take a selection of materials to those residents who are non-ambulatory. This should be done either weekly or bi-monthly.

You will also need people to oversee the collection at any time the room is open. I would recommend that residents be recruited to do this. This would serve a dual-purpose. The library would be staffed and the residents would have an important and worthwhile job to do.

Once people begin to visit the library you will need a system of checking in and out materials. Again, this system should be as simple as possible. All that is really necessary is for residents to sign their name and room number to a book card and for that card to be filed. It is unnecessary to have a date stamped on the book unless it is in such demand that there is a long waiting line to use it. When the book is returned, just replace the card and return the book to its proper shelf. This same method may be used for non-book materials.

The most important thing is to get people to use your library. Plants, aquariums and even small animals such as birds can make any room more attractive. Bright posters or prints, a bulletin board with important information, a large clock---all of these add warmth to a library. This room can be a very meaningful part of your nursing home. It can provide hours of worth and enjoyment to its residents. Good luck!

PUBLICITY

Publicity plays a major role in the success of your library. It is important for all staff members to help in this area. One major source of publicity is a nursing home newsletter. In it there should be a library section that could acquaint staff and residents of new materials in the library. One way of involving residents themselves is to ask those who are able to write short book reviews of new books received. Book reviews, book discussion groups and bulletin board displays are other ways of publicizing what's new in your library.

Fund raisers such as bake sales and craft sales are good ways of involving residents in earning money for the selection of new materials as well as informing the general public as to the need. Auxiliary organizations as well as your Board of Directors should be kept up-to-date on library purchases and activities. Donations of books and records may also be solicitied. However, you must be very specific about the kinds of materials you will accept. You do not need someone else's throwaways because the chances are very slim that they will be of value to you. You may also set up a Library Fund so that contributions made to your nursing home may be directed to that fund.

If you want to publicize special events of activities that are going to occur, make colorful posters advertising them and place them in lounges, dining rooms and other areas where residents congregate. When you first open your library, you might send individual invitations to residents, staff and other interested parties. And finally, if you have interesting and exciting things happening in your library, word-of-mouth publicity will be your best way of attracting people.

RESOURCES

Sources of Free Books and Magazines

The Corinthian Club
930 James Street
Syracuse, N.Y.
422-9917

- A sizable collection of books and magazine which they donate to institutions.

The Vassar Club Book Sale
The Fayetteville Free Library Book Sale

-They donate books remaining from their annual sales.

Sources of Materials to Borrow

Onondaga County Public Library
327 Montgomery Street
Syracuse, N.Y. 13202
Attention: Vita Tillpaugh
Braille and Taling Books Department
473-4227

- A sizable large print book collection from which you may borrow a rotating collection. Also talking books and talking book machines.

Other Sources of Information

Gerontological Information Program (GRIP)
School of Information Studies
119 Euclide Avenue
Syracuse, N.Y. 13210
423-4511

The Library of Congress
Division for the Blind and Physically Handicapped
Washington, D.C. 20542

New York State Office for the Aging - Free Subscription to
Empire State Plaza Talking Book Topics
Albany, New York 12223 magazine in large print.

Metropolitan Commission on the Aging
Onondaga County Civic Center
421 Montgomery Street
Syracuse, New York 13202
425-2362

The Lighthouse - Services to the blind.
373 Spencer Street
Syracuse, New York
422-7263

Library Supplies

Gaylord Brothers Inc.
7272 Morgan Road
Liverpool, New York 13088
457-5070